

## REAL ESTATE DULL

## Two Imposing Bank Buildings in Course of Erection.

## BOTH ON FIFTEENTH STREET

Prospective Investors Here Look for Big Returns—Alleged Combine of Apartment-house Owners Drive Tenants to Individual Homes—Some Activity in Georgetown Market.

A permit was issued to the George A. Fuller Company yesterday to erect the new office building of the Union Trust Company at the southwest corner of H and Fifteenth streets. The ground formerly occupied by the Wornley Hotel has been cleared, the excavation work is about completed, and the building is now ready to begin laying the foundations. Wood, Dunn & Deming are the architects, and the building is estimated to cost \$500,000.

The structure will occupy a frontage of 52 feet 8 inches on H street, and 15 feet on Fifteenth street. Behind the adjoining building on H street the new structure will form an L, extending west from the Fifteenth street building line 150 feet. Both fronts of the building will be of a fine grade of granite to be furnished by the Mount Airy quarries of North Carolina, operated by the North Carolina granite corporation.

## Bank on First Floor.

In the completed building the Union Trust Company will occupy about two-thirds of the first floor. The banking room will be two stories high, topped by a mezzanine floor at the back, which will contain rooms for the meetings of the directors, private offices for the president and other officials of the company. The other one-third of the first floor will be occupied by the Thomas J. Fisher Real Estate Company. The banking room and the offices of the real estate company will be furnished in real style, the walls and cornices will carry pilasters and ornaments and imposing chandeliers. The floor will be of polished granite, and the furniture, wainscoting, and bank desks will be in mahogany. The offices of the real estate firm, which will communicate with the banking room, will be finished in similar design, and when completed will be one of the finest real estate suites in Washington.

The George A. Fuller Company, it is understood, will hold its well-earned reputation for quick building in the construction of this banking house. It is estimated that the two construction forces on the Union Trust building and the Hibbs Bank, almost directly across the street, on Fifteenth street, will run a merry race in the effort to turn over their respective structures, one before the other.

## Market Is Dull.

The real estate market during the past week has been dull, according to the testimony of all the brokers yesterday. There have been few sales recorded. A good many are on the tap, but are not yet closed. One broker stated that the call for investments by persons outside of the city was now larger than it had been for several months, but those seeking to buy are placing greater strictures upon the broker than formerly. Investors are seeking larger returns from their investments. They wish to be made certain that the outlay will pay 5, 8, 10, or 12 per cent, or they are not tempted to buy.

## All Hunting Bargains.

In other words, the market, according to this broker, has practically settled down to bargain-hunting. He said he had been astounded at the volume of money seeking investment in Washington real estate. There seems to be no end of it, he said, but somehow the impression has gone abroad that the city is now in a period of great expansion, and investors are for the most part clamoring to get in on the ground floor of "good things" that will pay fat dividends on the investment. This broker said there was inquiry enough in the field to buy all the available real estate in the city, if the brokers only could give assurance that the purchasers could realize returns equal to their expectations.

## Apartment Houses Sold.

Among the more important sales of the past week were those of the Winton and Stanley apartment houses to Chester A. Spow by Moore & Hill; twenty-one brick dwellings on Heckman street for T. Franklin Schneider by Stone & Fairfax.

## Stump in Building.

Though the inspector of buildings in his monthly report said that there had been a slump in building operations in October, as compared with previous months and the same month a year ago, there is by no means a cessation in these operations. The local builders have taken out permits for something like fifty new houses during the week, and these will be rushed forward to completion with the coming spring.

## Trust in Flats.

A broker yesterday "let the cat out of the bag" with reference to the increasing tendency of families to leave the apartment houses and seek separate houses. He said that in the summer there was a meeting of the managers of apartment houses, at which it was determined to put up the rentals in the better class of flats. It was thought at that time that the popularity of these places of living warranted an increase in the rental. The managers found that the tenants would not stand the cost of increased rental. They began to take to the separate houses, and though in some cases the apartment managers receded from their position as to rentals, even that was not sufficient to stop the movement to the individual homes. It went forward and has continued through the fall months, and this broker said that some of the apartments of the city would have empty rooms this winter, judging from the slow manner in which the apartments are filling up with the coming back to the city of people, just prior to the opening of Congress. This broker said there was a distinct feeling among many who had lived in flats that they preferred the separate house, and he thought the time had come when a reaction had set in toward the old-fashioned method of living in one's own dwelling.

## Small Stores Wanted.

The spreading out of business continues to be a matter of comment among the real estate men. It was thought a month or so ago that the remodeling of old residences into small business places in the streets branching off from the downtown section

had about run its course, but more recently the call for small stores and other places has increased, and several builders report that they have contracts on hand to make over many houses along the streets leading north from F along G street, New York avenue, and in a corner parts adjacent to the business section. One builder expressed the opinion that in two years the territory lying between Ninth and Fourteenth streets as far back as H street would be dotted everywhere by shops on the ground floor with living rooms above. This builder said he had been obliged to turn away some urgent owners who wanted their property remodeled before he could undertake the job.

The Hayes-Sharp Realty Company reports a number of sales during the past month, most of which are suburban. This firm makes a specialty of properties located in the vicinity of Chevy Chase, including the subdivisions of Otterbourne, Somerset Heights, and Woodmont. The residence of C. Fred Cook, located on Cumberland street, Somerset, was sold during the past month to Dr. Z. W. Alderman, who will occupy it in the future. The property has a frontage of about seventy-five feet on Cumberland avenue, and commands a beautiful view of American University, the entire District, and the Virginia hills beyond the Potomac.

A number of young men in the Agricultural Department have recently purchased lots in Somerset, with a view of building homes on them in the near future. Three of them have recently married, and have already gotten their plans for a home, which they will erect in the early spring. The fact that these young men are from the Agricultural Department, calls to mind the fact that Somerset was first settled in 1899 by a party of scientists from that Department, who decided in favor of that location after having looked all around Washington for a suitable place to establish their homes. The little community has steadily grown, until it is now an incorporated town, with mayor, council, and town officials.

Milton Bonifant, of Goshall County, Va., has purchased a home site on the summit at Somerset, and will erect a handsome home in the old colonial style, such as are commonly seen in Virginia. The lot has a frontage of over 150 feet on Cumberland avenue.

The same company also sold the house at the corner of Melrose street and Douglass avenue, in Otterbourne, for Mrs. Earl, to Mr. Harper, of the Post-office Department. The property has a frontage of seventy-five feet on Melrose avenue, and is one of the prettiest homes in this popular subdivision.

The business property at 153 Wisconsin avenue, containing a frontage of about twenty feet on the avenue, by a depth of about 130 feet, was sold during the past week for G. Donald Miller to Charles Horatz, of New York. Mr. Horatz has made a number of purchases of real estate through this company, thereby demonstrating his faith in Washington realty.

The publishing plant of the Review Printing Company, on Thirteenth street between G and H streets, which was recently sold at public auction, was resold to G. H. Martin and others by the Hayes-Sharp Realty Company during the past week. There has been a company organized to continue the business under the firm name of the Model Printing Company.

## Georgetown Real Estate Notes.

Much interest is evinced in the coming public sale of the "Grant Mansion" on R street, for many years the home of Col. John A. Joyce, the poet, and his family. Prior to the occupancy of the house by the Joyces, Gen. Grant resided there. "Grant Mansion" is a generally designated, was built by John Carter, in his day a wealthy dry goods dealer, of Georgetown. The house is a spacious brick structure, crowning a hill which overlooks the Potomac. It was the property of Mrs. Joyce, who bequeathed it to her daughters. The property will be offered at public auction in order to close the estate.

To the west of the Joyce mansion is the old horse service reservoir, which the Georgetown Citizens' Association is anxious to have removed. It is unsightly in appearance and constitutes a huge bump on the landscape. It is understood that Gen. Mackenzie and the Commissioners have expressed themselves as being favorably disposed toward the removal of the reservoir. Just to the north, Wisconsin avenue makes a steep descent, and it is suggested that the reservoir earth could be used to fill this hollow, thereby making passable for teams a section of the thoroughfare that wagons invariably avoid.

The proposed building on the Joyce tract of 125 houses which, it is said, constitutes the main feature of the building movement, will develop a distinct community. Georgetown is in need of new houses. The people are tired of the old. Houses of reasonable price, real estate men say, will be readily sold. It is proposed to build on the houses on R street, on Lovers Lane, which is to be widened, on the proposed California avenue frontage, and upon cross streets. On the rear of the tract is a section of quarry property which offers facilities to the building speculator. From the rear of the tract to Massachusetts avenue extension is scarcely more than a city block. Rumor says that Philadelphia capitalists are behind the plan.

The two-story frame house, 244 P street northwest, was sold at public auction last Wednesday afternoon, to foreclose a mortgage. The lot fronts 24 feet on P street with a depth of 34 feet.

Capt. David H. Robinson is building a pretty home in Alexandria County, Va.

The Wetzel corner, at Thirty-fourth and P streets, was sold at public auction last Thursday for \$4,650. This property will be extensively improved by the new owner. The lot fronts 25 feet on P street, and about 100 feet on Thirty-fourth street.

The one-story Wisconsin properties, Nos. 1257 and 1259 Wisconsin avenue northwest, were sold during the week. This property was formerly owned by the Washington Gas Light Company. The lot fronts 40 feet on Wisconsin avenue, and runs back 130 feet to a 10-foot alley.

The Miller-Shoemaker Real Estate Company, in the past few days, has closed the following sales:

For George Bolding, 1320 Thirtieth street northwest, being a large frame dwelling, with adjoining lot. This is the old De la Roche home, in which Mrs. De la Roche, after a seventy-five-year leasehold, involving French spoliation claims, died on the day following an award by the courts of about \$30,000.

For R. C. Nettigan, parts of lots 30 and 31, square 1294, fronting on Thirty-fifth street, between M street and Prospect avenue, northwest. It is 80 feet in square 1294, fronting on P street, to E. Fabre. Both of these lots will be immediately improved.

For the widow of John Russell Young, improved property in square 1229, being part of lot 115, corner sales made by the company during the week include 1246 Thirty-sixth street, for Joseph C. Murray to Andrew Dorsey, 2210 Grace street to Matilda Dawson, 423 N street northwest to John H. Wolff, through P. J. Walsh.

The Washington and Great Falls Railroad Company has instituted condemnation

proceedings for the purpose of acquiring additional land along the road's route west of Georgetown, in certain places.

Sales in Georgetown made through various sources during the past week include: Three frames on Thirty-seventh street from Mrs. Leonard and Miss Coleman to Margaret Donoghue.

The demand for Water street property keeps up. Speculators, however, are noticeable rather than permanent investors. The railroad falls have brought about activity in this section that will be productive of commercial good. It is confidently believed that the Baltimore and Ohio would be in town within the next six months. Several of the merchants have asserted that their information comes from unquestioned authority.

## GERMAN EDUCATION.

## Another Plea for the Practical in Training Our Youth.

Editor Washington Herald:—If this land is wise, it will take note of the testimony, available on all sides, in support of that system of education which has helped more than all else to make the German empire successful. Any one who has watched the work of the industrial and commercial schools of Germany cannot fail to have noted their helpfulness in the life work of the men and women for whom they are intended. One feature, one that never failed to impress me, one that I found everywhere, was enthusiasm. Boys and girls went willingly into the laboratories of the schools. No leader or lagging force were theirs. Wherein was the secret? Love for the work, a work filled with facts, easily correlated to and co-ordinated with life work.

There the teachers have a happy faculty of interesting everybody in the room. There is no dry-as-dust recitation of dreary formulae, but active, energetic, real contact with facts and life. An excellent feature of the work in many places, is to be found in the method of dividing the day into what one might call the theoretical and the practical. The morning hours are devoted to books and the so-called cultural side of education. For the rest of the day, the students are to find as much of cultural value under the biologist's microscope, in front of the astronomer's telescope, in the soft lines of a bridge builder or railroad contractor, or in the marvellous machinery of a well-trained cook. I find of every found in Homer or Virgil. All depends on the viewpoint.

How real the work of the German schools is may be seen in the fact that many of the boys and girls are sent home to the parents of the pupils. It is customary in this country to refer to any new educational ideas as fads. Drawing is supposed to be, and often is referred to as a fad. I wish it were in my power to make Americans see what drawing is made to mean in European education, particularly in the industrial, industrial art, and technical schools. Girls who are to be the wives of workers learn to design, measure, cut, and make all manner of garments. They are taught how to select clothes, how to treat them both in making up, washing, ironing, &c.

No words could ever measure the amount of good done in the drawing classes, particularly in those that deal with the actualities of the girls' lives. From the humblest to the highest grade of work that is the work that will probably or possibly fall to the lot of the girls. Drawing is regarded as an essential element in education. It is used to train the eye, the hand, and the mind. A girl's mathematical sense is surely aided by the application of drawing to her mathematics. Her history is helped by the outlining of maps indicating countries.

An article of this kind would be incomplete were I to omit a word about the worth of these schools in giving girls a good idea of the chemical properties of foods, &c. This educational system's application to the kitchen commands it at once. The value of foods is one of the subjects that comes in for careful treatment. The girls get a good idea of the nutritive values of the various cereals, meats, &c., and their relative contents. Both the science and the art of good housekeeping are gone into with considerable care. Time is taken not only to teach girls how to select foods, what to select, but how to prepare and serve them.

The value of cleanliness is never neglected. The household economy possible to the people exercising care, and persons educated in the way indicated is enforced both by precept and by example. What it all means, in the homes of the people, on the farm, in the factory worker's home, is incalculable. Much that is attributed to the good character of the people, the home life of the people, these schools are turning out girls who go into life fairly well prepared to work, fairly well prepared to be good housekeepers, intelligent mothers, and actual helpmates to their husbands. The dignity of labor is inculcated. No false maxims are on the walls or in the books. At all times the girls go into an atmosphere as wholesome as is exhilarating. In the formation of strong character is not hard. As far as an education can contribute to the making of useful men and women, this system is a success. Where it has once been tried it remains. No power on earth could persuade the German to part with it. It is as much a part of the educational system as are the so-called academic classes. It is the most helpful part of the empire's educational system. It succeeds better than all other parts on correlating and co-ordinating education with life. Time and again I was told by manufacturers, merchants, &c., that the schools would be supported by themselves were the governments, state and municipal, to take away their aid. In conclusion, let me say that there are schools for the daughters of farmers, daughters of mechanics, and others higher graded for the middle classes. The girls of the upper classes learn in the kitchens of the leading hotels. Now, I must not be told to look at the cleverness of our women and compare. First of all, we do not live well, so far as the food is in question. Second, we are a nation of dyspeptics, patent medicine fiends, and neurotic tendencies. We are most abominably ignorant of the value of the teeth, bath, and exercise. We have baths, it is true, in our houses. Who uses them and how often? It is like our piano and music. Here every house has a piano or organ. How much real music have we?

In Germany every hundredth house, perhaps, and only perhaps, has a piano, but the entire people are in musical, sings, plays, lives, gets, and enjoys music. But, after all, it is not what they are or are not with the schools, but what they would be without them; not what we are without them, but what we would be with them.

## BUILDING PERMITS ISSUED.

The following building permits were issued by Building Inspector Ashford yesterday:

To George B. Washington, for one-story brick house and dwelling at 1414 Flagg place northwest; architect, Thomas F. Holden; builder, M. H. Herberman; estimated cost, \$3,000.

To Katie M. Brown, for two-story brick dwellings at 2094 and 2096 Flagg place northwest; architect, Thomas F. Holden; builder, M. H. Herberman; estimated cost, \$5,000.

To Charles A. Berry, for one-story brick dwelling at 202 Flagg place northwest; architect, Thomas F. Holden; builder, M. H. Herberman; estimated cost, \$3,200.

To Edith Askey, for repairs at 1229 Nineteenth street northwest; architect, R. O. Fisher; estimated cost, \$2,000.

To E. L. Johnson, for repairs at 1229 Pennsylvania avenue northwest; architect, the Royal Company; contractors, the Charles J. Cassidy Company; estimated cost, \$2,000.

To Union Trust Company, for one-story fireproof building; architects, Wood, Dunn & Deming; engineer, George A. Fuller; estimated cost, \$20,000.

## LAND VALUE GROWS

## Assessor Report Shows Enormous Increase.

## CHANGES IN LAW SUGGESTED

Assessor Darnelle Declares in His Report Present Personal Property Tax Works Injustice When Properly Enforced, Especially Regarding Banks and Trust Companies.

## Advocates Changes in the Law.

The report of Assessor H. H. Darnelle for the fiscal year, submitted to the Commissioners yesterday, shows an increase for the year ending June 30, 1907, in assessed valuation of real estate in the District of Columbia of \$7,841,703. The total assessed valuation of real estate in the District for the year ending June 30, 1907, amounted to \$247,396,430. For the fiscal year 1906 the assessed valuation of real estate in the District was \$239,554,727, the tax thereon amounting to \$3,261,023.78. The total tax on personal property for the year ending June 30, 1907, will be \$700,000. In relation to this subject, Mr. Darnelle said that the board of personal tax appeals will not adjourn according to law until the second Monday in March, and as a consequence it is impossible at this time to certify for the coming fiscal year, but the estimate is considered very conservative.

In relation to this subject, Mr. Darnelle said: "Our citizens are rapidly becoming more reformed and accustomed to the personal tax law. There will always be more or less friction in the operation of such a law, if conscientiously enforced, but I believe our law, taxing as it does only franchises and tangible property, is as moderate and equitable a personal tax law as may be found in the United States."

## Advocates Changes in the Law.

He advocates certain material changes in the law, especially in relation to national banks and trust companies, which he considers to be overtaxed at present.

He recommends that hereafter the national banks be required to pay 5 per cent per annum on the amount of their gross earnings, less amount received from government bonds, in lieu of the present 6 per cent per annum. With regard to trust companies, it is recommended that their tax be reduced from 6 to 4 per cent per annum upon their gross earnings, less the amount of interest paid to depositors.

In relation to the refunding of taxes, the Assessor says that as there is no act providing that no property, which has escaped taxation, shall be liable for a period of more than three years to such assessment, except in the case of property involved in litigation, he recommends that a bill be prepared providing that hereafter no erroneous payment of taxes shall be refunded for more than three years prior to date of application.

The work of rearranging and redesignating all parcels of lands in the county of Washington, it is stated, has been completed. Fifteen thousand dollars was appropriated for this work, which Mr. Darnelle says will prove of great benefit, as it gives a specific designation to every parcel of land in the District of Columbia. It is recommended that the board of equalization and review shall meet on the second Monday in January in every third year and receive appeals from the appeals of the board of assistant assessors, up to and including the third Monday in April, after which time no more appeals should be received or considered.

## Wants Power to Revoke Licenses.

The assessor again recommends a bill granting the Commissioners power to order the refusal or revocation of certain licenses.

During the fiscal year 1906, there were, by authority of recorded deeds, probated wills, &c., transferred on the records of the assessor's office, 8,203 parcels of land, 4,739 in the city and 3,464 in the county. This is an increase over the preceding year of 1,265.

## Many New Houses.

A retrospect of the work of the board of assistant assessors from 1897 to 1906, Mr. Darnelle says, gives an idea of the progress of building operations. In 1897 Bloomingdale had 61 houses, now it has 57, so far assessed; Le Droit Park had 20 houses; it now has 68. Dobbin's Addition was vacant land. At the present time there are 182 buildings. Moore & Barbour's Addition, which was, in 1897, a tract of twenty-seven acres, with one old building, now possesses 257 houses. These subdivisions, lying contiguous to one another, have a total of 1,574 dwellings and six substantial church edifices, with an estimated population of about 3,000, a city in itself.

Other subdivisions, it is stated, have similarly progressed. A noticeable feature of the year's progress, the assessor says, was the removal of so many old buildings and their immediate replacement with fine structures.

## Flat Buildings Numerous.

There are 248 flat buildings assessed in the District, the total valuation amounting to \$3,723,230. The average assessed value of the flat buildings in the city is \$7,728, and in the county \$7,231. Since 1897, 9,738 new buildings have been erected, and there are at present 63,787 buildings in the District of Columbia.

## Estimate of Revenue.

Mr. Darnelle estimates the total amount of revenue which will be available to meet the appropriations to be made for the support of the government of the District at \$5,329,880. In closing his report, which is the last he will submit, as his resignation takes effect December 31, Mr. Darnelle thanks the Commissioners for their consideration and support of his efforts to administer the affairs of his office.

## Fowls and Public Health.

Editor Washington Herald:—In your editorial of November 10, 1906, speaking of "chickens and other things," you say: "They (chickens) are certainly not as annoying as horses or cows in stable or automobile garages, or boiler shops, and all these, as well as other unpleasant things are allowed." All the things that you name are now regulated by police or health ordinances, and a regulating ordinance to conserve the public health in connection with the keeping of fowls is all that was urged at the hearing before the Commissioners Friday morning.


## Reports on Cities' Parks.

A detailed report of Dr. Henry S. Curtis, supervisor of playgrounds, who has returned from a visit to a number of other cities inspecting the public parks, has been made to the District Commissioners. He makes no recommendations, his report dealing with the parks in the respective cities, and the systems under which they are conducted. Dr. Curtis visited Chicago, New York, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Boston. This is Dr. Curtis' first draft of his report. The different parks in each of the five cities named were inspected by the supervisor of playgrounds.

## WASHINGTON BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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